BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Cancer

- **It is predicted that British Columbians will be below the national average for overall cancer rates in 1998**. Lower incidence and mortality rates for cancer are evident in this province as well as Newfoundland and Saskatchewan. The lowest cancer incidence rate for males was in Newfoundland (390 per 100,000 population) followed by BC (447). The Canadian rate was 501. The female incidence rate was lowest in Newfoundland (286), followed by Saskatchewan (329) and BC (332). The overall Canadian rate for females was 346.

  By incidence, there is a higher prevalence of prostate cancer (144) and melanoma (15) among men in BC relative to the Canadian rate of 112 and 11 respectively. Among BC females, melanoma (12) is one of the highest cancer incidences in Canada (9), after PEI (17).

  Cancer is primarily a disease of older Canadians. Over 70% of new cancer cases and over 80% of deaths due to cancer occur to those who are at least 60 years old. Since 1969, there has been a steady decline in cancer mortality for both genders and in all age groups under 60 years.

  Source: National Cancer Institute of Canada

Pension Plans

- **Approximately 40% of the paid workers in British Columbia belong to a registered pension plan (RPP)**. Membership to a RPP has been steadily declining—in 1983, 46% of paid workers belonged to a RPP, and this fell to 40% by 1993. This is not necessarily an indicator of people failing to provide for their retirement. Since 1995, RRSP's have surpassed RPPs as the primary means of saving for retirement.

  As of January 1, 1997 roughly 636,531 people in BC were members of 1,279 plans. Private sector pensions plans covered 54.3% of those paid workers, while public sector membership made up the remaining 45.6%. By gender, RPP coverage was 58.8% for males relative to 41.2% for females. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Housing Affordability

- **According to the most recent Census, 29% of British Columbia households experienced housing affordability difficulties in 1996**. Generally, if housing costs are greater than thirty percent of a household's income, it is an indicator of hardship. Renters (47% of households) are more likely to have housing affordability difficulties than are homeowners (20% of households).

  With respect to average monthly costs of housing, renters actually spend less than do homeowners. The BC average monthly cost of housing for homeowners was $799 compared to $704 for renters. However, due to lower average household income, renters are susceptible to housing affordability difficulties. The average income of a renter household was $33,901, relative to $59,939 for a homeowner household.

  People living alone were most likely to spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing. Over half the renters and homeown-

Report **Changing structure of the work week**

Did you know...?
In 1996, a BC homeowner on average spent $1,590 on home repairs and renovations.

ers (with a mortgage) who lived alone were in this category. Overall, roughly 41 percent of people who lived alone spent at least 30 percent of their income on housing. By comparison, less than 30 percent of all households were in the same bracket.

Source: Statistics Canada

Family Expenditure on Gambling

- **Eighty percent of British Columbian households reported spending some money on at least one gambling activity in 1996**. Survey results of household spending patterns on games of chance indicate, on average, households spend $319 annually on gambling in BC. Among the most popular activities were government lotteries where 75% of households participated with average spending of $252. Non-government lotteries and raffles represent 40% with spending of $58; casinos and slot machines (9%) had $625 and finally bingos (9%). The households participating in bingo (one in ten) also reported the highest average expenditure $771.

  On a national level, amounts reported from all four games of chance totaled $3.8 billion. Thirty-four percent of households reported average winnings of $236 per household.

  With the exception of bingo, men have a higher participation rate than women in all types of gambling. By educational attainment, those with a university degree had the lowest participation rate (62%) as well as lowest annual expenditure ($150). However, those with non-university diplomas had the highest rate of participation (79%) and those with less than high school education had the highest average expenditure ($280).

  Household expenditure on gambling increases as household income increases. But the proportion of spending relative to income levels is much smaller. Among households that participate in gambling, those with incomes less than $20,000 spent on average $300, representing 2.2% of total household income. Households with income of $80,000 or more spent $600 on gambling, which represents only 0.5% of their total income. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Common-law Unions

Since the early '80's common-law unions have tripled in Canada. From less than one in sixteen (700,000) people in 1981, to approximately one in six (2 million) in 1995. This phenomenon has been responsible for a decline in the number of marriages. In addition, the rate at which couples enter a common-law union has increased steadily since 1991. Women who marry their first common-law partner have 10 times less risk of separating.

Source: Statistics Canada

Home Care

- **In 1994/95, 522,900 Canadians received home care or 2.4% of the people 18 years and older**. Over one-third (36%) of home care recipients were for those aged 65 years and under—a common misconception is home care is limited to geriatric services. Chronic illness such as arthritis/rheumatism made up 46% of all home care users. In addition, one in four people afflicted with the effects of a stroke represented 10% of all home care users.

Source: Statistics Canada

The Nation

- **Canada's economy paused for the second consecutive month with a 0.2% decrease in May**. Weak performances, as measured by GDP, were widespread with the most significant declines in the finance, manufacturing, mining, construction and transportation service industries. Thirteen of the 22 major manufacturing industries were affected by declining outputs. Production of wood products declined 2.8% in May as a result of weaker Asian demands, export restraints associated with the Canada-US softwood lumber agreement and lower housing starts in the US.

Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

July 31, 1998

Infoline Report:

The changing structure of the work week

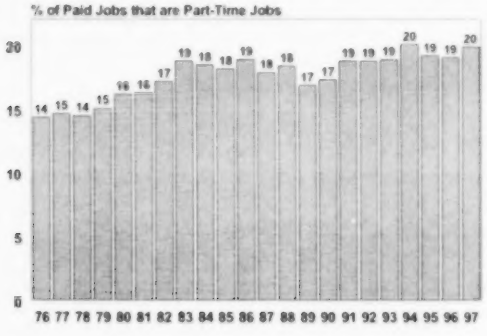
Contact: Anne Kitteredge (250) 387-0374

Originally published in March 1998 issue of *Earnings & Employment*. Annual subscription is $60 + GST

Jobs, as defined in this analysis, are all paid jobs where there is an employer/employee type relationship. The self-employed are excluded. Below we will examine the changing patterns of the hours worked in these employer/employee type jobs in the BC economy. For our purposes, jobs are defined as "**part-time**" (if the employee usually works less than 30 hours per week at the job), "**regular-time**" (if the employee usually works in the job between 30 and 40 hours per week), and "**extra-time**" (if the employee usually works in the job more than 40 hours per week). The calculation of the usual hours worked per week excludes overtime.

Part-time Jobs (less than 30 hour work week)

The Increasing Importance of Part-time Jobs in the BC Economy Has Levelled Off in Recent Years



***Note**: The relatively high levels of part-time jobs of the mid-1980's reflect the difficult economic times – a large per cent of the part-time workers had no choice but to work shorter hours. When these involntary part-time fluctuations are accounted for, the structural change in the part-time to full-time job ratio shows a more gradual continuous ratcheting up over time.*

Part-time jobs have increased from 15 percent of the job market in the late 1970's to 20 per cent, or one of every five current jobs. This increased availability of part-time jobs is sometimes viewed as a negative trend, forced upon workers by their employers. Salaries are obviously lower and fringe benefits are frequently restricted for part-time workers. On the other hand, increased part-time jobs in the economy may reflect the changing work-pattern preferences of the workers. Part-time jobs often provide workers with the flexibility to juggle family responsibilities or other personal interests with their work life. In 1997, three of every four persons working in part-time jobs, preferred it that way.

Not all sectors of the economy have increased the availability of part-time jobs. In fact, Agriculture, has seen a slight decline. The remainder of the goods-producing sector, which includes the forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing and construction industries, shows modest increases.

Particular industries in the service sector have shown real structural changes in the availability of part-time jobs. Employers in Finance, Insurance and Real Estate have increased their relative number of part-time jobs dramatically. The rate has doubled since the late 1970's. (The Banking Industry's expansion of its service hours to weekends sheds light on why this change has occurred.) Likewise, the Education sector stands out as having significantly increased their part-time to full-time job ratio.

On the other hand, those service industries that traditionally have many part-time jobs have not shown signs of any further long-term movement from full-time to part-time in the last two decades. These industries are Health Services, the Hotel/Restaurant sector and Retail Trade (contrary to the common perception that many retail employers had converted full-time jobs to part-time jobs to reduce employee overhead costs).

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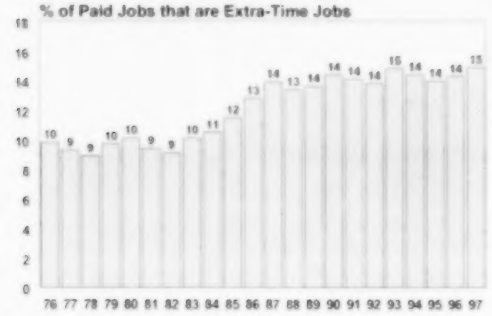
Extra-time Jobs (more than 40 hour work week)

At the Other End of the Spectrum, Jobs with Long Working Hours Have Also Been Increasing

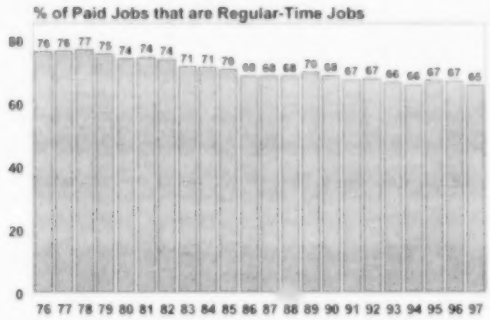


Much of the upward trend to long work weeks is attributable to the high growth in the type of occupations that traditionally have a high component of extra-time jobs. One of every four Management type jobs (25 per cent) and 30 per cent of Teaching jobs typically require more than 40 hours per week. Both these occupation groups saw growth rates above the average as well as increasing proportions of their workforce with extra-time jobs. Other occupations with many long hour jobs are the seasonal jobs of logging/fishing/farming and construction jobs. Many truck drivers also work long hours at a stretch.

Regular-time Jobs (30 - 40 hours per week)

Increases in the number of part-time and extra-time jobs has meant a steady decline in the relative number of regular-time jobs over the past twenty years. However, the 35-40 hour work week does remain the norm -- 60 per cent of all employees fall into this category – although this type of arrangement has been losing ground. Likely, most jobs in this category are on the standard 7 to 8 hours per day, five days per week type schedule.

Today, Regular-Hour Jobs Constitute Only Two of Every Three Jobs



The other category in regular-time jobs is the 30-34 hour work week. This could be, for example, a 6 hour day for five days a week or perhaps an 8 hour day for 4 days per week. Although the number who work a 30-34 hour work week is relatively small, (only 6 per cent of total jobs) this category has shown the largest increase of all types of work arrangements over the past twenty years. If these employees work alongside co-workers putting in 35 to 40 hour weeks, they likely see themselves as part-time workers rather than regular-time workers. If that is the case, the reduction in regular hour jobs and the increase in part-time jobs would be even more dramatic than the Statistics Canada definition indicates.

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/98	% change on one year ago
BC	3,958.7	1.4
Canada	30,488.9	1.0
GDP and INCOME		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	1997	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	109,347	3.3
GDP *($ 1992 millions)*	98,201	2.2
GDP *($ 1992 per Capita)*	25,039	0.2
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1992 per Capita)*	16,515	-2.3
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) May	2,621	-10.4
Merchandise Exports (raw) Apr	1,909	-19.5
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) May	2,789	-1.5
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	Jun '98	one year ago
BC	110.4	0.4
Canada	108.8	1.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Jun '98	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,041	1.9
Employed - BC	1,849	1.0
Unemployed - BC	192	11.7
		Jun '97
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	9.4	8.6
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.4	9.1
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jul 29/98	July 30/97
Prime Business Rate	6.50	4.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.55	5.65
- 5 year	6.95	7.00
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jul 29/98	July 30/97
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.5034	1.3812
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.6652	0.7240
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	May '98	one year ago
BC	618.23	-0.6
Canada	605.71	0.8

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings	Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates	Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

Released this week by BC STATS

- Business Indicators, July 1998
- Current Statistics, July 1998

Next week

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, Qtrs 1 & 2, 1998

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